

*Revision of State Dept  
plan, probably  
about 26 Nov 1945*

On September 20, the President directed the Secretary of State to "take the lead in developing a comprehensive and coordinated foreign intelligence program for all Federal agencies concerned with that type of activity."

In considering what steps should be taken to accomplish this purpose, it is important not to lose sight of the broad scope of the intelligence needs of the Government nor of the many Federal agencies involved. Agencies such as the Commerce Department, Agriculture Department, Treasury Department, the Tariff Commission, the Federal Reserve Board, and a host of others all have responsibilities which require foreign intelligence. Further, the needs of these agencies are not mutually exclusive. Even departments with extensive intelligence facilities, such as exist in the War Department, cannot fulfill their requirements without securing the assistance of other departments.

The requirements of a comprehensive foreign intelligence program go far beyond strategic or high level military and diplomatic needs and rest on the necessity for understanding fully foreign events, to know all the facts which motivate foreign nations and peoples, and to have readily accessible

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in useable form a mass of factual information at all levels where decision is made or where action is taken. Most needs are obviously broader than can be met solely by the activities of a single intelligence agency.

In order to carry out the President's directive of September 20, therefore a plan has been developed which proceeds from the assumption that many departments will require some intelligence facilities and that the responsibilities placed on the Secretary of State by the President's letter require,

(1) The creation of permanent interdepartmental machinery to accomplish the procedure outlined in this letter of "planning of complete coverage of the foreign intelligence field and the assigning and controlling of operations in such manner that the needs of both the individual agencies and the Government as a whole will be met with maximum effectiveness."

(2) The development of such central operations as are necessary to a comprehensive program to supplement but not supplant the operations in the various departments.

An agreement (attached hereto) has been drawn up providing for the creation and staffing of central machinery to accomplish both of the above purposes. Its principal features are summarized below with some discussion of the reason for the provision

especially with respect to those points which differ somewhat from the provisions of other plans which have been advocated for the post-war organization of the Government's intelligence activities.

Coordination.

The plan provides that responsibility for coordination will be centered in the Secretaries of War, Navy and State with the provision that the secretaries of other departments participate at such times as the subject matter under discussion is of important interest to their departments. There seems to be no disagreement on the necessity for some such mechanism whether it be called an interdepartmental coordinating authority or a national intelligence authority or a national security council or what not. In drawing up the specific plan the advantage of including all agencies of interest within the coordinating group had to be weighed against the disadvantage of creating too large and unwieldy a group at the top. The State, War and Navy Departments constitute the principal departments of concern and the State Department has special responsibilities for coordinating the Government's foreign policy and programs. For these reasons it is believed the participation of other departments only when matters of special concern to them are involved will suffice to secure their interest and cooperation.

In view of the omission on a continuous basis of many departments concerned and of the already adequate representation of the military through the civilian top policy officials of their departments, no reason is seen for including a representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Committees.

The principal mechanism through which the detailed operating plans essential to a coordinated program would be developed is a Committee structure. These Committees would be made up of responsible representatives assigned from each department concerned with the particular subject matter either as a user or contributor.

It is believed that only through such a device can sufficiently detailed planning be accomplished as to fulfill the need for a coordinated Government-wide program. Such planning cannot be entrusted to a central staff working independently of the departments affected.

Committee Chairmen.

Each Committee will work under a Chairman. In each case, the Chairman of a particular Committee will be designated by the top coordinating group from the department of principal interest in

the subject matter with which the Committee is to be concerned. It is intended that the Chairmen of these Committees will normally be relieved from other departmental duties.

Interdepartmental Secretariat.

The Chairmen of the Committees collectively will comprise an Interdepartmental Secretariat, in order to give cohesion to the planning as a whole.

Through this means the interdepartmental character of the planning is insured.

Executive Secretary.

In accordance with the President's directive to the Secretary of State to assume the leadership, it is provided that an Executive Secretary to give direction to the Interdepartmental Secretariat's activities and to supervise the execution of agreed plans will be appointed by the Secretary of State with the approval of the other members of the top coordinating group.

The essence of coordination is joint and cooperative effort. It is believed that a Director of an independent central organization would be confronted with insurmountable obstacles in achieving coordination. The provision of an Executive Secretary does not permit the delegation of the top group's ultimate responsibility under the President's directive. Further, the

delegation to an independent Director of both the responsibility for conducting highly technical intelligence operations and to achieve Government-wide coordination would result in the latter responsibility never being discharged.

Central Operations.

Contingent upon the attached agreement, it is planned to supplement departmental operations initially by providing for two central operations. These coincide with those which all other proposals also envision.

(1) The conduct of secret intelligence operations.

(2) The preparation or putting together of reports and estimates for action or policy determination at the Government level.

Secret Operations.

Provision is made for the selection of a Director to conduct this activity by the top coordinating group and for its financing and support by the State, War and Navy Departments from among funds available to these Departments. The plan further provides for as complete freedom of operation by the Director as is consistent with the needs of the three Departments to hold him responsible for adequacy and usefulness of results and for the carrying out of broad policies, especially those relating to any official involvement of the Government.

It is believed that any provision for an independent budget to carry on secret operations increases the risk of embarrassment and exposure of the activity as well as violating what are considered to be fundamental concepts:

(1) Any secret operation must not be identified with any branch of the Government, least of all the President's office.

(2) It must be operated as an adjunct to a comprehensive scheme of intelligence openly secured, to fill in only the gaps in that intelligence.

(3) Its product must be available without equivocation to the three Departments primarily concerned with the national security.

(4) Its activities must be part of the responsibility of these three Departments in order that its product will be put to use.

(5) Its continuance should not be made a matter of decision without State, War and Navy Department joint decision.

(6) Its activities should be confined to those which the State, War and Navy Departments will support and desire from time to time.

Strategic Estimates.

Provision is made for the preparation of strategic estimates through the joint efforts of War, Navy and State Departments through a staff set up within the State Department but including staffs from the other departments.

The problem of providing intelligence bearing on decisions at a level above the Departments is one of bringing together all available pertinent information that exists. There is no such thing as "national policy intelligence" which is distinguishable from the moment of its collection to its dissemination in reports. Secret intelligence is not in itself strategic intelligence.

To place in the hands of an independent Director the responsibility for providing such intelligence would be to remove from the three Departments mainly concerned a basic responsibility for advising the President. Such an arrangement would encourage the eventual development (insofar as Congress would provide funds) of an independent large-scale research operation in addition to that existing in the Departments.

Further, the placing of this responsibility in the hands of a Director of a clandestine intelligence operation would be to put this type of intelligence into an entirely incorrect focus and lead to the actual withholding of secret information from the Departments.



Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- a. The attached agreement be approved.
- b. The concept of central operations described above be approved.